



Let's treat a Doctor as Human!!!

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“VAIDYO NARAYANA HARI”

The ancient Indian saying which meaning that “a doctor is treated on par with God” was really felt true in yester decades when the profession enjoyed faith and trust of general population to treat them and get rid of their sufferings.

But in the modern world, is it still the same?

What I am about to describe is a common scenario these days. A critically ill patient admitted in the hospital succumbs to their illness and when the news is broken to the relatives by the treating doctors, the relatives, who are in pain and sorrow, loose control and blame / assault the doctor and create ruckus in the hospital, destroying property. The perception of a doctor and medical profession is rapidly changing in the recent past and both doctors and general population seem responsible for this degradation. There are some genuine cases where doctors are at fault and these must be dealt properly as per existing laws. In most of the cases it is the inadequate counseling or lack of communication which leads to lack of trust and anxiety in patients and relatives mind. There are systems including consumer and criminal courts to take actions, as these must be dealt as per the law of the land. Each case should be examined individually and not generalized to all doctors.

A doctor is someone who commits one third of his life time to learn the art of treatment and dedicates the rest of his life for the care of mankind. The thoughts that doctors charge a lot and are more interested in making money and less about care of patients are not the real reflection and these should be erased from people's mind. There is a lot of gap between the need and supply in health care system, similar to other sectors, in a developing country like us. The private sector seems expensive because they bear all the cost and work on a profit generating economic model while cost effective services of the public sector, which are heavily subsidized by our government, does not seem to match the expectation to deliver perfect health care. Here we need to understand the economics of health care which is extremely complex and makes us understand that quality health care if needs to be delivered comes at a cost. This has to be “provided or afforded” and cannot be created by mere efforts of a doctor.

In a country like India, where we have scarcity of doctors and these acts drive people away from taking up the profession. The way doctors are portrayed in the media is also wrong and creates a complete wrong impression. It might help the channel to raise TRPs for a day or two, but spoils doctor's carrier for all his life. Doctors are part of the same socio-legal environment as other systems in the society which is plagued with chronic dishonesty, corruption and scams. These have percolated down into our profession as well. Hosting a show spreading the negative image about doctors and the profession actually does not help rather widen the gap between the care giver and the patient.

Each doctor or every act of unrest must be individualized and not have a general consensus. Patients should approach doctors with faith. Black sheep are found in every profession, but assuming each doctor the same is a crime. One way to prevent it is to improve the healthcare services in the public sector. There is a recent government order which is planning to cap doctors registration fees to Rs. 50/- while the same state has a movie ticket costing as much as Rs. 1000/- which airs the same movie starring the popular actor who accused medical profession. The actor charges crores of money for a movie, he accuses doctors of charging patients for the care provided. There are lawyers who charge lakhs per hour, builders and designers with exorbitant fees and politicians looting crores of public money. The fees charged by doctors is very negligible compared to any of the above. All professions should be free to charge for their services and must apply to all. Doctors must not be cornered on the name of a “Nobel profession”. It's essential to bear in mind the sacrifices a doctors puts in, forgoing their own family life for the care of patients.

I am signing off hoping for a change in conception and hope that doctors will be treated as humans at least.

Thank you!

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